

No Rouz Lesson Plan

Elements of a Holiday – or – What Makes a Holiday?

Lesson Plan – Grades 1st - 4th

Materials: *No Rouz: Our Persian New Year* by E.S. Zameen, and a chalkboard.

Class Presentation

Discuss elements of familiar holidays. Ask students what things make a holiday. What makes a holiday different from any other day? What things do we do for a holiday that make it a special day?

Answers: special foods and desserts, time off from school and work, gathering with family & friends, and special decorations. Be sure to solicit answers that include all these general elements. List general elements on one side of the board, and specific items on the other. For example:

General
special foods
or desserts

Specific
birthday cake
Christmas dinner
Halloween candy

Before reading *No Rouz: Our Persian New Year*, ask students to listen for the elements of the No Rouz celebration. Read the book to the class. (Erase the items from the board in the specific column.) Ask the class what were the foods, what were the decorations, etc and write these specific items next to the category it belongs in.

(End here for younger grades by summarizing that every holiday has things that make it feel different from everyday life, and this is the same for Persian New Year. For older grades, continue as below.)

Ask the students what were some elements of No Rouz that don't fit into the general element topics we have on the board? If desired, add an "other" category on the board.

Possible answers: shopping for new clothes, cleaning the house, jumping over a fire, the throwing of the sprouts.

Explain that the Persian word "No" means *new*, and "Rouz" means *day*. Ask the class why these particular elements are a part of a springtime, new year celebration. (All the elements on the board symbolize renewal, springtime, or rebirth.) As a class relate the elements to how they symbolize renewal, springtime, or rebirth.